

## Everybody Counts in Redistricting Process

Dr. Anisha Dalal, Chair, 2010 Redistricting Commission of the City of San Diego

This fall, San Diego's eight City Council districts will look different. A new ninth district will be created. And by getting involved now, San Diegans have a chance to influence the way we elect our Councilmembers for the next ten years.

After each U.S. Census, the City Charter calls for an independent Redistricting Commission to be created. The Commission re-draws boundaries so that districts are as evenly matched in population as practicable and follow the requirements of our nation's governing documents.

Each member of the Commission wanted to serve because we believe in a transparent and impartial process run by residents who, like us, have made San Diego their home.

To make sure we hear from as many San Diego residents as possible, we're going above and beyond the 7 public hearings required by law, offering at least 20, as well as accepting testimony at regular Commission meetings, in writing, and by telephone. Starting later this month you'll also be able to go on-line and create a map of your community to send to us.

For the convenience of local residents, we'll hold at least two hearings in every Council district, plus a Saturday hearing in a central location. The current set of hearings will occur before we draw maps. Later, we'll return to each district to collect comments and feedback about alternatives before adopting a final map.

What does all of this redistricting activity mean for San Diego residents? It means the Commission is serious about hearing what matters to them.

So that all citizens of the City have fair and effective representation, we need to know what makes residents feel connected to one another. We need to hear about the key features and activities that people value about their surroundings. Is *neighborhood* the place where they eat and shop, where their kids go to school, the surrounding parks, where they gather to worship, celebrate or play? Is the community defined by special events or landmarks?

We invite everyone – people of all ages, lifestyles, and cultures – to help us draw the lines. We won't have this opportunity again until 2020. So speak up and be counted – help us understand what should be part of your Council District.

***Editors' Note:*** Information about the Commission and a list of public hearings is available at [www.sandiego.gov/redistricting/](http://www.sandiego.gov/redistricting/), or contact Midori Wong, Chief of Staff, at (619) 533-3060.